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DEVIANT BEHAVIOR IN SWEDEN

SCHOLARLY STUDY ON SWEDISH PROBLEMS COVERING CRIME, ALCOHOLISM, DRUGS, SUICIDE, SEX AND DIVORCE. CHARTS AND TABLES.

LOUIS BULTENA, PH.D.

To many Americans, Sweden is made up of sin, sex, suicide, and socialism. In the past fifteen years, journalists in this country have hurled sharp barbs at the country whose political and economic development have made it a symbol of hope. Statistics seemed to paint a picture of a country swamped with sexual deviation, suicide, crime, drug abuse, divorce, and alcoholism. Further, critics hinted darkly that the welfare state was the cause of all these problems. Professor Louis Bultena explores this theory.

"Whatever their motives, the critics stirred my curiosity. I resolved to find out for myself the nature of Swedish values and ways of life. Accordingly I took a leave of absence from the University of Northern Iowa and spent my time in Sweden interviewing, reading, searching, and listening for some kinds of objective answers concerning the nature and amount of deviant behavior in Sweden. Wherever possible I looked for the long-term trends as well as the present situation, and in order to give the data some perspective, I have compared them with corresponding data in the United States."

Professor Bultena's examination is both quantitative and qualitative, and within these pages he presents an undistorted view of Sweden's problems within the perspective of its own social norms and an urban, industrialized society. Particular emphasis is given to Sweden's penal code and correctional system. Many existing myths concerning Sweden are refuted, particularly the belief that it has an abnormally high suicide rate.

The author's conclusions may come as a surprise to the general public: "There is no evidence that any of the several varieties of deviant behavior is a result of the social welfare program. If anything, welfarism diminishes, controls or prevents deviant behavior."

About the Author

LOUIS BULTENA was raised in South Dakota. He holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Wisconsin and presently heads the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. Professor Bultena has led student summer tours in Mexico, the American Southwest, and various countries of Europe, including the Soviet Union. He is a member of the American Sociological Society and the American Association of University Professors.

The author and his wife, Beatrice, live in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

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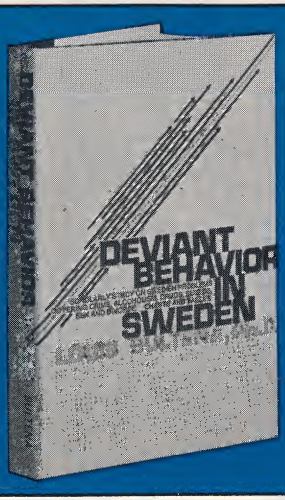

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